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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AF-10
EB-07 /099 W
----------113910 282025Z /64
R 281630Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5553
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
US LIAISON MISSION PEKING 71

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 10653

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CH, IT
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI'S VISIT TO CHINA

REF: A) HONG KONG 7226; B) USLO PEKING 1280

1. SUMMARY: A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL WHO ACCOMPANIED FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI ON HIS CHINA VISIT OFFERED THE FOLLOWING INSIGHTS INTO THE JOURNEY IN ADDITION TO THOSE PROVIDED IN REFS. A AND B. THE GENERAL IMPRESSION OF THE ITALIANS, AS RELATED BY OUR SOURCE, WAS THAT THE VISIT OFFERED LITTLE IN THE WAY OF NEW INSIGHTS INTO CHINESE POLICIES AND THINKING. END SUMMARY

2. REGARDING THE UNITED STATES, THE CHINESE TOOK THE LINE THAT WE HAVE NOT DONE ENOUGH TO PROTECT OUR WORLD-WIDE INTERESTS IN THE FACE OF INCREASED SOVIET AGGRESSIVENESS. IN PARTICULAR, THE CHINESE CITED THE AMERICAN FAILURE TO RESIST SOVIET ENCOURAGED ACTIONS IN ANGOLA AND ZAIRE. AT THE SAME TIME THE CHINESE CHARACTERIZED ALL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE USSR, INCLUDING CSCE, SALT, MBFR AS TRAPS WHICH IN THE LONG RUN WOULD WEAKEN THE WEST
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AND STRENGTHEN THE SOVIETS. THE CHINESE WERE INTERESTED IN OBTAINING A BRIEFING ON THE LONDON ECONOMIC SUMMIT AND ON ITALIAN PERCEPTIONS OF THE NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION.

3. IN TALKING OF THE STATE OF THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE US, THE CHINESE SAID THAT THESE MUST DEVELOP

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IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE, GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT MUCH WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE BEFORE ALL THE GOALS ARE REALIZED. THEY TOLD THE ITALIANS THAT WAIWAN IS AN INTERNAL PROBLEM AND THAT THEY WILL DECIDE WHEN AND HOW TO RESOLVE IT BASED ON DOMESTIC CONSIDERATIONS AND NOT ON THE BASIS OF A SERIES OF INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSIONS.

4. CONCERNING THE CHINESE-US TALKS ON FROZEN ASSETS, THE CHINESE SAID THAT PRESS SPECULATION THAT A POSITIVE CONCLUSION OF THESE WILL ASSIST IN RESOLVING THE PROBLEM OF TAIWAN AND IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IS ERRONEOUS. THEY ARGUED THAT A SOLUTION SHOULD NOT BE BASED ON AMERICAN LAW BUT ON THE BASIS OF A BILATERAL AGREEMENT, AND THAT THE EVALUATION OF THE TOTAL VALUE OF ALL THE ASSETS UNDER DISCUSSION SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE OVERALL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

5. ON EUROCOMMUNISM, OUR SOURCE SAID THAT FORLANI'S CONVERSATION WITH HIS COUNTERPART ON THIS SUBJECT OCCURRED WHILE RIDING IN A CAR. HIS DESCRIPTION OF FORLANI'S CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE BRIEF DISCUSSION WERE IDENTICAL WITH THOSE PROVIDED IN REFS. A AND B.

6. ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT, THE CHINESE CLAIMED THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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BECAUSE OF THE DISRUPTIONS CAUSED BY THE GANG OF FOUR AND DAMAGE FROM NATURAL DISASTERS, THE CHINESE ECONOMY HAD PERFORMED BELOW EXPECTIONS IN 1976. THE CHINESE

EXPRESSED THEIR HOPE TO RESUME THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC EXPANSION IN 1977 AND TO PUSH FOR A NEW GROWTH OF THE COUNTRY'S INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC TIES IN 1978. THE ITALIANS IN THEIR DISCUSSION WITH THE CHINESE, NOTED THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT AT A RECENT SHARP DROP IN EXPORTS TO THE PRC.

7. IN A FINAL OBSERVATION, OUR SOURCE NOTED HOW STRUCK THE ITALIANS WERE BY THE CONTROLS PLACED UPON THEM IN CANTON AND SHANGHAI. WHILE THEY FELT NO LIMITS ON THEIR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IN PEKING, THE ITALIANS WERE OBLIGED TO MOVE AS A GROUP AND WERE NOT ABLE TO WANDER AROUND ON THEIR OWN IN THE OTHER TWO CITIES.

8. COMMENT. CONCERNING THE ALLEGED SHIFT IN PRC ATTITUDE TOWARDS EUROCOMMUNISM, WE HAVE NOT YET PERCEIVED THIS IN THE COURSE OF PERIODIC ENCOUNTERS WITH PRC DIPLOMATS STATIONED HERE. THEY CONTINUE TO

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SUGGEST THAT THE US HANG TOUGH ON THE SUBJECT OF
THE ENTRY OF COMMUNIST PARTIES INTO GOVERNMENTS OF
NATO COUNTRIES, ALTHOUGH AN ITALIAN COMMUNIST
JOURNALIST SYMPATHETIC TO THE PRC SUGGESTED TO US
SOME TIME BACK THAT THE CHINESE WOULD BE MODIFYING THEIR
FORMERLY RIGID STANCE AGAINST THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST
PARTY (PCI). WE RECALL THAT LAST FALL GIANCARLO
PAJETTA, PCI SECRETARIAT MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY
FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS , SUGGESTED THAT THE PCI WAS
PREPARED TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH THE CHINESE
PARTY. MEANWHILE, THE CHINESE HERE IN ROME HAVE
APPARENTLY CONTINUED TO CULTIVATE THE RIGHT-WING
OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND MADE A MAJOR SHOW
OF APPEARING AT A SPEECH LAST WEEK BY BRITISH CONSERVA-
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TIVE PARTY CHIEF MARGARET THATCHER DURING WHICH SHE
CLEARLY ENUNCIATED HER AVERSION TO THE IDEA OF THE
ACCESSION OF COMMUNIST PARTIES TO POWER IN NATO
COUNTRIES . AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY
SUBSTANTIVE CONTACTS BETWEEN PRC EMBASSY OFFICIALS AND
PCI LEADERS.GARDNER

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